



PART 2

PAUL IN CORINTH: LEADERSHIP UNDER FIRE

Chapter Seven

“WHO IS SUFFICIENT FOR THESE THINGS?”

If you want to see proof of how important leadership is, don't miss the fact that Satan often aims his most ferocious attacks at key leaders. Among all the wicked devices the evil one employs, some of his very favorite weapons are half-truths and deliberate lies that breed rebellion and attempt to undermine the trust people have placed in godly leaders.

Against the very best of leaders, Satan will invariably try to stir up a Korah (the rebel who organized a revolt against Moses) or an Absalom (the wayward son who led a rebellion against David's rule). That's why Scripture says **“rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft”** ([1 Samuel 15:23](#)). To defy a leader who is called by God and faithful to the truth is a peculiarly satanic sin.

1 Samuel 15:23 (NASB)

²³“For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from *being* king.”

It is therefore appropriate that Paul said the false teachers who had confused the church in Corinth were satanic emissaries—**“ministers”** of Satan ([2 Corinthians 11:13–15](#)).

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 (NASB)

¹³“For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

¹⁴No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

¹⁵Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.”

That is exactly what they were: tools of the devil, evil agents in his campaign against the cause of truth. They had deliberately focused their main offensive against Paul and his

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leadership. It was a strategic and well-placed assault, because if the powers of darkness could nullify Paul's influence in Corinth, that already-troubled church would be completely at the mercy of the false apostles.

Paul was not eager to defend himself personally, but neither was he willing to abandon the Corinthian church to wolves. So he spent a considerable amount of time in [2 Corinthians](#) doing something he found distasteful: defending his own character and credentials.

Paul's competency as a leader and an apostle was under direct attack. We've already seen how his *sincerity* was being questioned. The false teachers were also trying to provoke doubts about his *adequacy to lead*. They attacked his character, his influence, his calling, and his humility. They claimed Paul was not qualified to lead. He was inadequate, they said.